



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

MADAM OF BROTHEL WHERE IMMIGRANT MINORS WORKED AS PROSTITUTES SENTENCED TO 4 1/2 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON

LOS ANGELES -- A Mexican national who was the madam at a Los Angeles brothel where about a dozen young women and girls worked as prostitutes was sentenced today to 54 months in federal prison after being convicted of federal violations.

Maria de Jesus Valle-Maldonado, 27, was sentenced this afternoon by United States District Judge Gary A. Feess, who said the defendant used "abusive and coercive techniques" to keep the girls working. In addition to the prison term, Feess ordered Valle-Maldonado to pay \$135,542 in restitution to nine victims.

Valle-Maldonado pleaded guilty four months ago to one count of conspiracy to import and harbor aliens for the purpose of prostitution, two counts of importation of aliens for the purpose of prostitution, and three counts of bringing illegal aliens into the United States.

Valle-Maldonado is the fourth person to be convicted on federal charges resulting from an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement that uncovered Valle-Maldonado's brothel at 354½ East 84th Place. The investigation revealed that at least 12 Mexican women, including 14- and 15-year-old girls, worked as prostitutes for Valle-Maldonado and her accomplices.

When she pleaded guilty July 1, Valle-Maldonado admitted that she recruited young women, including the teenagers, in Mexico and paid for them to be smuggled into the United States so they could work for her as prostitutes at massage parlors and residences in the Los Angeles area. Valle-Maldonado required the women to work as prostitutes for a set term, typically five or six months.

The other three defendants in the case are:

* Javier Sandoval-Garcia, 29, a Mexican national and Valle-Maldonado's boyfriend, who also pleaded guilty on July 1 to conspiracy to import and harbor aliens for the purpose of prostitution, two counts of importation of aliens for the purpose of prostitution, and one count of bringing illegal

aliens into the United States;

* Jose Velasquez-Garcia, 28, a Mexican national, who pleaded guilty June 9 to conspiracy to import and harbor aliens for the purpose of prostitution and five counts of importation and harboring aliens for the purpose of prostitution;
and

* Juan Gregorio Martinez-Vasquez, 37, a Mexican national, who was found guilty at trial of two counts of transporting illegal aliens.

Feess is scheduled to sentence Sandoval-Garcia Jan. 10, at which time he faces a maximum possible sentence of 35 years in prison. Velasquez-Garcia was sentenced on Sept. 13 to six months in federal prison. Martinez-Vasquez was sentenced on Aug. 16 to six months in prison.

This case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.